

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing Reply, claims 1-4 are pending in the application, with claims 1 and 3 being independent.

Based on the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections Under Double Patenting

The Office Action indicated that claims 1-4 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1-26 of co-pending Application No. 10/105,253. The Examiner stated that "[a]lthough the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because of the following: claims 1 and 2 of the instant application are broader than claims 25 and 26 of co-pending application 10/105,253. Claims 3 and 4 of the instant application essentially recites the same limitations of claims 5-7 of co-pending application 10/105,253 except in a "means for" format.

The Examiner also stated that claims 3 and 4 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 5-8 of U.S. Patent No. 6,727,756. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because claims 3 and 4 of the instant application of the instant application are broader than claims 5-8 of the '756 patent.

Applicants submit herewith terminal disclaimers over co-pending Application No. 10/105,253 and U.S. Patent 6,727,756. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 1-4

under the judicially-created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting has been fully accommodated and should be withdrawn.

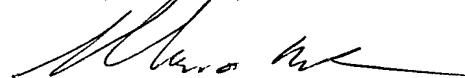
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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